

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9676

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USUN NEW YORK 192

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1110

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ELAB, CY, BU

SUBJECT: BULGARIA SIGNS AGREEMENT ON CYPRIOT WORKERS

REF: NICOSIA 1351

1. ON MAY 28, PRESS REPORTED THAT BULGARIAN MINISTER OF CONSTRUCTION AND ARCHITECTURE, GRIGOV STOCHKOV, AND CYPRIOT MINISTER OF LABOR, MARKOS SPANOS, SIGNED AN AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH CYPRIOTS WILL WORK ON CONSTRUCTION SITES IN BULGARIA.
 2. ON JUNE 2, GREEK AMBASSADOR IN CONFIDENCE EXPLAINED TO CHARGE THAT AGREEMENT COVERS ONLY THE TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL WHICH CAN BE RECRUITED AND PAY CONDITIONS. ALL OTHER ASPECTS OF AGREEMENT ARE COVERED BY CONTRACT BETWEEN A PRIVATE CYPRIOT ENTREPRENEUR AND BULGARIAN MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION AND ARCHITECTURE.
 3. ACCORDING TO THE AMBASSADOR, THE CYPRIOT-BULGARIAN GOVERN-
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MENT AGREEMENT STIPULATES THAT WORKERS WILL BE REFUGEES

WHO ARE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS - UNMARRIED WORKERS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE. CYPRIOTS WILL RECEIVE 50 PERCENT OF PAY IN BULGARIAN LEVA AND REST IN CYPRIOT POUNDS. IF WORKER IS ABLE TO SAVE LEVA DURING HIS STAY IN BULGARIA HE WILL BE ALLOWED TO CONVERT HIS SAVINGS INTO CYPRIOT POUNDS AT END OF CONTRACT. CYPRIOT FUNDING OF SCHEME WILL BE FINANCED THROUGH CURRENT BULGARIAN-CYPRUS TRADE AGREEMENT BY SWING SETTLEMENT.

4. ENTREPRENEUR CONTRACT COVERS WAGE TO BE PAID, HOUSING, WORKING HOURS AND LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS. ONE THOUSAND CYPRIOTS WILL BE BROUGHT TO BULGARIA TO WORK ON HOTEL CONSTRUCTION ON BLACK SEA. BASICALLY, THEY ARE FINISHERS, I.E., CARPENTERS, TILERS, ETC. AFTER INITIAL GROUP ARRIVES EXPECTATION IS THAT OTHERS WILL FOLLOW, GREEK AMBASSADOR SAID.

5. COMMENT: BULGARIA NEEDS SKILLS CYPRIOTS WILL BRING AND ASSUME CONTRACT WILL ALSO HELP CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT IN EMPLOYING REFUGEES. THERE MAY BE POLITICAL SPIN-OFF FROM ARRANGEMENT PROVIDING CYPRIOTS ARE HAPPY HERE WHICH HAS NOT BEEN CASE WITH OTHER IMPORTED WORKERS.

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